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Valkyrie



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Chapter 1 by celloandjello

I've always hated my job. Reaper of souls. I decide who dies and who doesn't on a battlefield. It's gruesome. It's wrong. And I have to do it.

After doing this countless times, I couldn't take it anymore. I was a murderer. The reason why when I was assigned to a future battle the gods foretold, I ran away.

A few days later, I received a message from a faerie informing me that I was banished from Valhalla.

This wasn't really that bad. I don't have to do my job anymore. It just means that I'll won't be welcome anymore in the gods presence. And I even if I'm welcomed back someday, I will have a permanent bad record. Which wouldn't help me very much.

I've watched humans for a while, who's souls I reap. I wonder how they live, without immortal lives and their limited capabilities compared to the gods.

Now I will have to live among them. Guess that'll answer my questions.

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I take a job in what is called the "Story Wars". It's a place where people can make up little games and technologies to make them more fun. I'm fascinated that they can think anything up at all.

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It's a game involving a single, heavy ball. Each human is assigned one based on its weight. They fling it down a large stretch of wood - some do it hard, some soft, and I suppose this is where the strategy of the game comes in - and aim for a row of white statues called "pins". The goal is to knock as many as you can down in only two turns. In between, people order foods and drinks, another way to pass the time while passing the time: do humans ever allow themselves to rest? That's my job, by the way, bringing them these treats. A popular one seems to be something they call pretzels. I've tried one. I can't fathom how anyone can handle this much salt in a single bite.

Still, it's an agreeable job. No wars. No deaths. Sometimes a child will make the mistake of kicking the ball and will cry, but the parents mostly handle the repercussions of that. The most I do is fetch some ice.

Little did I know that I was being watched.

Chapter 3 by -



One man. Everyday dressed in average clothes. Comes in and orders a hot-dog and drink. He sits in a corner affording him the most privacy and the best view.

All day. Every day. The man comes and watches. He breaks no rules. He commits no crimes. He cannot be kicked out.

And yet his eyes are on me. The entire time. From the moment He steps in the door, to the second I walk out. His gaze is unbearable. The way he looks me up and down. The way he strips me to shreds. The way he searches my soul.

I am not used to people staring at me in *that* way. To me, his intentions are quite clear. But to anyone else, he seems harmless.

Harmless. No, he is not.

Chapter 3

I had stepped out of the room to get a glass of water. I had been standing outside the door, watching him. He had turned and started walking away.

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The man from within was now standing here, holding my car door open. I was sitting on the seat piercing my flashing gaze into his.

But it was no use. He stood there with a glassy look in his eyes, oblivious to my fuming. With a dreamy, untamed, wild stare he looked down at me. It made me squirm in my seat. I jumped up, but he put out his hand and pushed my back.

I cocked my head in disbelief. But what could he really do in front of a bowling alley with people coming and going? Nothing.

Well, almost nothing.

Chapter 5 by Stan Johnson



Most people call me Lars Ulnjiir--Lars for short. I've been called many other things besides, but never indecisive. When a chance to uncover a multi-generation secret walked into the local bowling alley, I knew I had to act, no matter how much I wanted to wet my pants and run away.

Of course, it didn't hurt that the secret came packaged as an incredibly gorgeous woman. Great granddad was right about her eyes--I couldn't take mine off of them.

Of course, the way she clears her throat and the unexpected look of panic in those eternally-deep blue eyes confuses me.

"It's not polite to push women around," she says, her face hardening. I feel something move in the air, and my skin clams up. Wow. Great Granddad had been right about that too.

I step back, suddenly aware that I've made a complete buffoon of myself.

Always your luck with the ladies, Lars, I remind myself. *No wonder you're still single.* I run my hand through my hair and fish a tattered, folded page out of my pocket--a photocopy of a painting Great Grandpa did. I frantically unfold it, and examine it, even though I memorised it by the time puberty hit. As expected, the woman in the car matches almost exactly.

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All that once I can't do this. The problem is, I really want another chapter and I don't like this one.

chance, there won't be a generation of Ulnjiirs after me to carry on the hunt.

Swallowing hard, I kneel in front of her, and pull a sixty-year-old wooden box from my other pocket. *This one's for you, Grandpa.* I pry it open and hold it out for her to see. Her eyes widen, and her breath catches. I hope she likes it the way my ancestor thought she would.

"I'm Lars Ulnjiir. Will you--will you marry me?"

Chapter 6 by Florenceia



The man kneels before me and opens the worn oaken box. Inside lays a delicate ring of rose gold and silver, woven around the three diamonds. It's beautiful, breathtakingly so, but when the words come out of his mouth I know what it means. His name brings back memories of a dark past. A time I have tried to forget.

Ulnjiir, the name of the thieves. Over the course of a thousand years they had stolen the heart of the fallen angles. The banished Valkyrie had fallen for them. I could not walk into their trap. I could not be bound to them like a slave.

He knelt there waiting. His young eyes innocent and naive to the pain and corruption I knew. He could dream of me in his bed, but I would never, never fall that low to the ground.

Chapter 7 by The Coffee Freak



I shook my head vigorously, he seemed taken aback.

"No, No I wont." I pushed past him walking at first then ran back to My job. I clocked in and continued on with my day like nothing ever happened. That is, until he came in. I could tell by the look in his eyes that he was ticked. I cursed under my breath and smiled a fake smile.

"Hello, how can I help you?" I asked as pleasantly as possible. He sighed.

"You know how you can help me." He muttered.

"Not interested," I muttered. Just remember who he is, I told myself. I stood up a little straighter.

"If there's no way you can help me, I could just report you to your boss." I said, he looked calm, like his comment didn't matter at all. I stood my ground.

"My answer is still no. now. how can I help you?" I said through gritted teeth.

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I stand at the end of the hall
And I realize that I'm not alone

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I let out a breath. "I'm sorry," I tell her. "I just... well, you know... I..." I sigh. "Nevermind. I don't even know how to say it."

Triumph and mockery seems to flash in her eyes, and that makes me even angrier. It's bad enough that I made a complete fool of myself in front of such an *amazing* girl, but now she's making fun of my for it? I don't need this.

And yet... I do.

"Can you set me up for another ten frames," I ask, gesturing to the bowling lanes as I fish out my wallet. I pause. "No, make it twenty."

She frowns. "Are you sure your arm won't fall off from bowling that much? Mortals seem--" she stops herself, eyes widening.

"Excuse me?" I ask.

"Nothing," she blurts, ducking behind the counter to pull out a pair of shoes. "Are these your size?" she asks, sliding them across the counter toward me, clearly keeping her distance.

I seize my chance. I reach for the shoes, but pretend to stumble, forcing my hand forward, and brushing across hers. She jerks her hand away as if burned, and I feel my face get hot.

"Hey, look," I tell her, "I'm not very good with women. And... yeah... I know that I dropped a bomb on you--"

"Bombs don't bother me," she said.

I can't help but blink. "Okay," I saw slowly, taking my shoes and handing her some cash. "Um... I think I'm going to go bowl now."

As I turn away, something inside screams at me to turn around and try again. It's almost a ~~animal ancestral urge. At least I could ask her if I could buy her a drink... do things the normal~~

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before her. She snatches it from my hand.

"Where," she demands, "did you get this."

I force a smile. "I'll tell you over a round of... bowling."

Chapter 9 by -



Valkyrie turned her head aside and took a deep breath. Her hands shook as she slid the picture back across the counter. "Twenty rounds still?" Her lips were pursed in annoyance.

I couldn't help but smirk at her perturbation. "No, just one."

She stepped away from the counter and walked over to get a bowling ball. Then stood and faced me. "Let's get this over with." Her tone was icy.

I felt a pang of regret at having made her do this. But if she wanted information, at least wanted to spend some time with her. "You start!" I try to sound agreeable as I finish trying my shoes.

"Well, where did you get it?" Valkyrie looked at me after she threw the ball down the lane.

I could tell only wanted a direct answer, and nothing more. "My grandfather."

Her eyes flashed white. "How is that even possible!"

Chapter 10 by -



I ignored her for the moment, and focused on aiming the bowling ball. I stood and gave a prolonged watch as the ball rolled down the lane and knocked over all the pins.

Valkyrie was glaring at me, I could feel her intense gaze boring into my back. Her foot began to tap as she put her hands on her hips.

"You know very well how it is so." I sarcastically stared at her.

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I stepped towards her and she turned to face me. I could see the only one way
it could be possible, you know. I took a deep breath and stepped forward and grabbed her
other wrist.

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"Do you understand now?" I spoke close to her mouth, so close our noses touched...

Chapter 11 by -



I slid my fingers up to her chin, slightly tilting her head up. I tried to ignore the fiery hatred in her uplifted face. But it was there, and it pained me to think that one rightly mine could be so hostile...

But I couldn't blame her. All her life she had been taught to look with aversion upon my family's name.

Valkyrie suddenly jerked her arms and pulled away from my grasp. Like a demon let loose, she stared at me. Her eyes lit into red sparks, and her blonde hair flashed like lightning.

"If you think some phony old photo will get you my soul, than you're a fool! I value myself much more than that. And I will honor my father's last wish, even if I have been cast out of Valhalla." Her voice echoed through the alley, shaking the walls and rattling the pins to the ground.

I felt a strong presence. Something unfamiliar. Something supernatural. It weaved through the place like a think wind. It blew Valkyrie's hair up in a twist and swirled about her like a heavy fog.

"YOU CANNOT NOT WIN MY SOUL!" Her words reverberated off the walls, causing a strange effect upon my mind. I tried to shake the power off, but I was no match for the goddess Valkyrie.

Chapter 12 by -



But just as quick as the power had rushed around Valkyrie, so it fled. Flying away like the spirit of a Vampire when a crucifix is pulled before its face.

The goddess slumped to the ground. As if it had drained her of life. I caught her limp body and straightened her out. She laid there for many seemingly endless minutes, her chest heaving for every breath.

And I watched her in concern, Valkyrie suddenly moved, the deep creases of her skin turned white, a pale, white

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I leaned over her and stared into her fading gaze. My features spoke of worry and despair.

Valkyrie swallowed hard and then pulled me closer. "Forgive me, I... Loved... You..." Large tears trickled down her pale face, as her hand dropped to the floor.

the end

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